

Galveston County Title VI Complaint Procedures

Any person who believes that he or she, or any other program beneficiaries, has been excluded from participation in or denied benefits or services of any program or activity administered by Galveston County or Galveston County's sub-recipients, consultants, or contractors on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or Veteran status, may file a written complaint with Galveston County by filing the complaint with the Galveston County Title VI Coordinator. Complaints may also be filed with the Texas Department of Transportation.

Complaints must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant and/or the complainant's representative. The complaint must set forth as fully as possible the facts and circumstances surrounding the alleged discrimination. Written complaints received by the Title VI Coordinator will be processed in accordance with the procedures herein.

Initial Determination and Notification

1. The Title VI Coordinator or the Coordinator's designee will review the complaint to ensure that relevant information is provided, that the complaint is timely filed, and that the complaint meets jurisdiction.
2. The complaint will be investigated, unless:
 - a. The complaint is withdrawn;
 - b. The complaint fails to provide required information;
 - c. The complaint is filed beyond the 180-day time frame;
 - d. The complainant is not part of a protected group; or
 - e. The complaint is determined to be more appropriately reviewed under a jurisdiction other than Galveston County. If this is the case, the complainant will be directed to the appropriate agency.
3. The complaint will be reviewed to determine if any reported concerns involve discrimination or prohibited conduct on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability or Veteran status, on such matters pertaining to the:
 - a. Provision of transit services;
 - b. Distribution of transit amenities;
 - c. Denial of services and discriminatory treatment by bus operators; or
 - d. Transit service changes.

Note: The list of potential transportation-related matters identified above is not exclusive or exhaustive.

Note: Galveston County shall forward a copy of each transportation-related discrimination complaint to the Texas Department of Transportation for investigation within ten (10) calendar days from Galveston County's receipt of the complaint.

2. If the Title VI Coordinator determines that the complaint has Title VI elements and needs to be investigated, the Title VI Coordinator will send a letter to the complainant, which shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and give the name of the investigator. A copy of the letter shall be retained in the file. The determination of whether a complaint has Title VI elements should be made within five business days (i.e., generally one week) after the date of receipt of the complaint. Thereafter, the Title VI Coordinator shall provide the notification to the complainant within five calendar days of making the decision to investigate the complaint as a Title VI complaint.
3. If the Title VI Coordinator determines that the complaint does not have Title VI elements, the Title VI Coordinator shall document this in a letter to the affected party.
4. The Title VI Coordinator will keep and maintain a record of all correspondence received or generated regarding each complaint that the Title VI Coordinator receives.

Investigative Process

1. For Title VI related investigations, the Title VI Coordinator or the Coordinator's designee will contact the complainant for additional information (if needed), interview personnel knowledgeable about the incident, including any witnesses the complainant has listed, street supervisors, dispatch personnel, and other Galveston County staff with pertinent information. If the complaint involves a third party contractor's staff, a meeting with the contractor will be part of the investigation. As part of the investigation, a designated person may conduct field observations and examine any previous complaint histories. For Title VI complaints on County personnel, the Title VI Coordinator shall coordinate with the affected County Office or Department and the County Human Resources Department.
2. After talking to all affected parties and stakeholders, the Title VI Coordinator or the Coordinator's designee will summarize the findings in an investigative report. A draft report will be prepared that includes a narrative description of the incident, interview summaries, a finding with preliminary recommendations for remedial steps as appropriate and necessary.
3. A draft report will be completed within 45 days from receipt of a complaint and will be reviewed by the Title VI Coordinator, other County Staff as appropriate, and Galveston County's legal counsel, with any changes incorporated as necessary, before being finalized.
4. A final report will be produced within 60 days of receiving a complaint. The Complainant will receive a copy of the final report together with any remedial steps. The final outcome of the Title VI investigation will be noted and a copy of the Final Report will be kept in the Title VI files.
5. No person shall be subjected to intimidation, retaliation, coercion, or discrimination because the person has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in a Title VI investigation. The identity of complainants shall be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes of Title VI, including the conduct of any Title VI investigation.

6. The Title VI Coordinator or the Coordinator's designee shall maintain a log of Title VI complaints received. The log shall include the date the complaint was filed, a summary of the allegations; demographic information listed by the complainant; the name of the complainant; the nature of the complaint; the disposition of the complaint, the date of the disposition; and other pertinent information related to the complaint.
7. The Title VI Coordinator may convene a meeting of the Title VI Advisory Committee on an as-needed basis in the Coordinator's review of complaints or obtain assistance from a Title VI Representative on the Committee on an as-needed basis, at the discretion of the Title VI Coordinator. If the Title VI Coordinator convenes a meeting due to a complaint or requests assistance, this fact will be listed within the Final Report on the complaint. The Title VI Advisory Committee shall meet on at least a quarterly basis to review the number and nature of complaints and for training on Title VI and related statutes compliance.